

## Message Text

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SUBJECT: BOMBING AND MURDER ATTEMPTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

REF: BELFAST 98

1. SUMMARY. IN THE PAST TEN DAYS THE PROVISIONAL IRA MADE SEVERAL BOMB ATTEMPTS AGAINST SOLDIERS AND THE INFRASTRUCTURE. NORTHERN IRELANDERS WERE TITILLATED BY RARE PUBLIC LOOKS INTO PIRA'S TROUBLED SITUATION LAST AUTUMN. END SUMMARY.

2. ON JUNE 10 AND 11 PIRA REMOTE-CONTROLLED BOMBS SERIOUSLY WOUNDED AN ARMY LIEUTENANT AND A SOLDIER ALONG THE SOUTHERN BORDER. IN THE FIRST A BLAST-INCENDIARY BOMB IN A HIJACKED CAR LEFT IN THE SQUARE OF A SMALL TOWN WAS DETONATED AS PATROL WALKED BY. THE NEXT DAY A BOMB BLEW A LAND ROVER OFF A ROAD. IN ADDITION, LAST NIGHT (JUNE 15) A SOLDIER WENT INTO A SHOCK WHEN A BLAST BOMB EXPLODED UNDER A FIRING POINT OUTSIDE A POLICE STATION IN DOWNTOWN BELFAST. THE STATION IS ON NORTH QUEEN STREET, HALF A MILE FROM THE CONGEN'S QUEEN STREET AND OUTSIDE THE SECURITY BARRIER.

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3. AGAIN USING THE BLAST INCENDIARY (A POUND OR TWO OF HIGH EXPLOSIVE PACKAGED WITH A CAN OF GASOLINE) BUT MORE OF THEM, PIRA JUNE 12 DESTROYED A DOWNTOWN BUS STATION AND 21 BUSES. A 20-MINUTE WARNING WAS GIVEN, AND NO ONE WAS HURT. THE STATION IS THREE BLOCKS FROM THE CONGEN OUTSIDE THE SECURITY BARRIER. ONE JUNE 7 PIRA BOMBS

DAMAGED SEVERAL POST OFFICE VANS PARKED JUST OUTSIDE BELFAST'S ZONE, AND DAMAGED A GOVERNMENT OFFICE IN THE UNIVERSITY AREA. THE SAME DAY SEARCHERS FOUND A 100-POUND BOMB ON THE DUBLIN-BELFAST RAIL LINE ABOUT TEN MILES NORTH OF THE BORDER. PEOPLE HAD HEARD THE DETONATOR GO OFF, BUT IT DID NOT DO ITS JOB.

4. ALSO ON JUNE 7 GUNMEN SERIOUSLY WOUNDED A FORMER UDR (ULSTER DEFENSE REGIMENT) MAN ON HIS DOORSTEP IN THE PROTESTANT WORKING CLASS SHANKILL AREA OF DOWNTOWN BELFAST. THE SHOOTING PRESUMABLY WAS A TIT-FOR-TAT ATTEMPT TO REVENGE THE YOUNG PROVO SHOT JUNE 6 (REFTEL).

5. IN DERRY JUNE 10 CIVILIAN-CLOTHED SOLDIERS KILLED A PROVO. THE ARMY SAID HE AND A COLLEAGUE HAD TRIED TO HIJACK A CAR BEING USED BY THE SOLDIERS. THE DEATH TRIGGERED A RIOT IN DOWNTOWN DERRY. CLAIMED THEIR MAN WAS MURDERED BY THE SPECIAL AIR SERVICE (SAS).

6. NORTHERN IRELANDERS HAD A RARE LOOK INTO PIRA'S DIFFICULTIES. JOHN JOHNSON, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE DERRY PROVISIONAL SINN FEIN (PIRA'S POLITICAL ARM), REPORTEDLY ACKNOWLEDGE PIRA'S "TRAUMATIC" DIFFICULTIES LAST YEAR DURING A SPEECH IN THE REPUBLIC. JOHNSON ALLUDED TO REPORTS THAT LOYALIST PARAMILITARIES ARE SHOWING INTEREST IN A NEGOTIATED INDEPENDENT NI, AND SAID THE REPUBLICAN MOVEMENT WOULD HAVE

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NONE OF IT. WITH CONSIDERABLE EXAGGERATION, JOHNSON ALSO SAID THE STRUGGLE IS INTENSIFYING, "ONCE AGAIN EMBRACING THE PROTESTING MASSES ON THE STREETS."

7. MORE IMPORTANTLY, THE PRESS PUBLISHED A PIRA "STAFF REPORT" THAT SURFACED IN A TRIAL IN THE SOUTH OF BELFAST PIRA LEADER SEAMUS TWOMEY. THE REPORT ACKNOWLEDGED PIRA FAILURE IN THE NUMBER OF MEN ARRESTED WHO SIGNED CONFESSIONS, AND IT OUTLINE THE REORGANIZATION OF STRUCTURE INTO CELLS THAT PIRA UNDERWENT SOME MONTHS AGO. A HIGHLIGHT OF INTEREST TO POLICE IN TRYING TO IDENTIFY THE SINN FEIN WITH PIRA WAS THE RECOMMENDATION THAT "SINN FEIN SHOULD COME UNDER ARMY (I.E., PIRA) ORGANIZERS AT ALL LEVELS."

8. COMMENT: NOT A BAD PERIOD COMPARED TO EARLIER YEARS, BUT PIRA SHOWS A CONTINUING ABILITY TO MAKE SIGNIFICANT TROUBLE IN SEVERAL PARTS OF THE PROVINCE. THE PUBLIC STATEMENTS ARE COCKY BUT ALSO DEFENSIVE. STOUT

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